

**The Homily at the Statio Orbis by  
Cardinal Ouellet, Papal Legate of His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI**  
*"Let us Bear Witness to This Grace by Calling Others to Faith in this Communion"*  
**DUBLIN 17 JUNE 2012**

Dear brothers and sisters,

The fiftieth occurrence of the International Eucharistic Congress is now coming to a close. We are deeply grateful to God for the light of His Word and for the gift of the Holy Eucharist, which strengthen our communion with Christ and with one another.

At the end of this celebration we will listen to the message of Pope Benedict XVI. His speaking to us reminds us that this International Eucharistic Congress bears witness to the Catholic Church as the universal communion of many particular Churches. The Bishops, priests, religious and lay faithful here represent the Catholic Church which is found throughout the world in thousands of communities, but which is one in faith and love of Jesus Christ. I greet the ecumenical representatives and I thank you all for being part of this grace-filled event.

I greet the President of Ireland, and all the civil authorities, fondly aware of the noble tradition of this courageous nation. I thank wholeheartedly Archbishop Martin, Cardinal Brady and all the collaborators of this event for the gift of their warm hospitality and for the example of their strong dedication to Christian renewal in this country.

In order to prepare ourselves to listen to the Holy Father's message, let us briefly reflect on today's readings, which bring us a message of great hope and confidence.

Through the prophet Ezekiel the Lord says, "From the top of the cedar, from the highest branch I will take a shoot and plant it myself on a very high mountain. I will plant it on the high mountain of Israel. It will sprout branches and bear fruit, and become a noble cedar" (Ez. 17:22-23).

In the Gospel, Jesus uses a similar image to speak about the Kingdom of God: "[The kingdom] is like a mustard seed which at the time of its sowing in the soil is the smallest of all the seeds on earth; yet once it is sown it grows into the biggest shrub of them all and puts out big branches so that the birds of the air can shelter in its shade" (Mk. 4:31-32).

We understand the prophecy of Ezekiel in the light of Christ. Jesus Christ is the shoot taken from the highest branch, he is God from God, and planted by God himself on a very high mountain, which is Calvary.

God the Father has planted on Calvary the seed of the Cross out of love for his creation and for all sinners. The seed of the Cross is the Sacred Heart of His only begotten Son, pierced to death by our sins, but raised up from death by the power of divine mercy.

Therefore Christ Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. He is the Holy Redeemer in whom we trust and find salvation. The seed of Christ's love, buried in the ground of Calvary, produced an unimaginable fruit: a tree, the Tree of Life, a noble cedar which is the Holy Church of God, the dawn of the Kingdom. We believe in the one, holy, Catholic and apostolic Church, because we believe in Christ who wills the Church to be His body, born from the self-gift of His Eucharistic Body.

Dear brothers and sisters, let us rejoice and be full of confidence. "We are full of confidence" (2 Cor. 5:6), as St. Paul says to the Corinthians. We are so because the risen Lord is our home and our safety. We do experience limitations and failures in the Church, but the Lord sustains us, healing our wounds and strengthening our love. Let us rejoice in Him and be glad!

We can rely on the Lord for a new beginning. St. Paul gives us the key for any personal or ecclesial renewal: "We are intent on pleasing Him" (2 Cor. 5:6). This key to renewal in our lives is a decision to recommit ourselves to love the Lord and to live and to die for Him, knowing that His grace will never fail. May the upcoming Year of Faith strengthen in us this decision!

Jesus is the seed sowed by God Himself in the depths of the earth, a seed that fell to the earth, died and was raised to eternal life. From this smallest seed of salvation comes the Tree of Life, the Church, in which all of humanity is called to find a home and safety in the company of the risen Lord.

For this very reason, the Church is called, and we are called, to bear witness to the Lord by pleasing Him, that is, preaching the Gospel, living in fraternity and praising God for the gift of salvation.

After this week of Eucharistic reflection, celebration and adoration, we are certainly more aware of God's call to communion with Him and with one another.

Let us bear witness to this grace by calling others to faith in this communion. The Irish bell, which resounds from Lough Derg, from Knock and Dublin, must resound in the whole world. Let's ring the bell further through our personal testimony of renewed faith in the Holy Eucharist.

Faith is the most precious gift we have received with Baptism. Let's not keep it private and fearful! Let it grow as a splendid tree through sharing everywhere!

Even if we are sometimes tested in our faith, do not be afraid, and remember who we are: the body of Christ intent on loving God over and above all things, intent on living in the Spirit of the new and eternal covenant.

We are not alone; the Spirit of Pentecost dwells in us. The communion of saints, with Mary at its heart, comes to our assistance as soon as we have rung the bell of prayer in total confidence. Keep hope and be glad, for the kingdom of God is near!

Dear brothers and sisters, at the end of this Mass we will listen to the Holy Father's message for the conclusion of this Congress. Let us listen to him with great respect and gratitude since he is our spiritual father, a father who is holy and worthy of our trust and sincere obedience.

May our communion with the Body of Christ be a new bond of love; a small seed perhaps, but, by God's grace and divine mercy, a fruitful one.

Together we pray the words of Saint Ephrem, deacon and doctor of the Church: "Lord ... we have had your treasure hidden within us ever since we received baptismal grace; it grows ever richer at your sacramental table. Teach us to find our joy in your favour! Lord, we have within us your memorial, received at your spiritual table; let us possess it in its full reality when all things shall be made new" (Sermo 3, De fine et admonitione 2. 4-5). Amen!